

Message Text

SECRET

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 094162

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR PICKERING FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS PFOR JO US

SUBJECT: JORDAN'S AIR DEFENSE

REF: LONDON 5685

1. PLEASE DELIVER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE FOLLOWING
MESSAGE TO KING HUSSEIN:

2. BEGIN TEXT:

YOUR MAJESTY:

I VERY MUCH APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY YOUR
VISIT TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS WITH YOU ISSUES OF COMMON
CONCERN TO OUR TWO COUNTRIES. IN PARTICULAR, YOUR ADVICE
AND SUGGESTIONS AS REGARDS THE DIFFICULT SITUATION IN
LEBANON HAVE BEEN OF IMMENSE VALUE TO US AS WE DEAL WITH
THE COMPLEXITIES OF EVOLVING EVENTS THERE.

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IN RETROSPECT, HOWEVER, I REGRET THAT WE WERE NOT ABLE TO

EXAMINE WITH YOU THE FUNDING PROBLEM INVOLVED IN THE HAWK/VULCAN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM YOU HAVE WANTED TO PURCHASE FROM THE UNITED STATES. OUR BASIC REASON FOR NOT DOING SO WAS THAT, SHORTLY BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL IN WASHINGTON, WE HAD INSTRUCTED OUR AMBASSADOR IN JIDDA TO EXPLORE WITH THE SAUDIS SOME CAREFULLY WORKED-OUT ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS AIMED AT RESOLVING THE FUNDING PROBLEM TO THE MUTUAL SATISFACTION OF JORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA. THE SAUDIS HAD NOT RESPONDED TO OUR PROPOSALS AT THE TIME OF YOUR VISIT. IN FACT, THEY STILL HAVE NOT PROVIDED A DEFINITIVE ANSWER.

IN ESSENCE, WE HAVE SOUGHT TO OUTLINE TO THE SAUDIS THE MILITARY JUSTIFICATIONS FOR AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM OF THE KIND YOU ARE SEEKING AND TO REQUEST THEM TO CONSIDER SUPPLYING MORE FUNDS THAN THEY HAVE SO FAR OFFERED. IF THE SAUDIS REMAIN UNWILLING TO BEAR THE FULL COSTS OF THE TOTAL SYSTEM AT THIS TIME, WE HOPE THAT THEY WILL AT LEAST AGREE TO FINANCE THE MAJOR PORTION OF IT AS THE FIRST STAGE OF A TWO-STAGE APPROACH. IF THE SAUDIS AGREE TO THIS CONCEPT AND OFFER THE FUNDING FOR THE WEAPONRY YOU REQUIRE, WE COULD GO FORWARD WITH ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM AND MEANWHILE INVESTIGATE WAYS OF FINANCING A SECOND AND FINAL STAGE, WHICH WOULD CONSIST OF SOMEWHAT LOWER-PRIORITY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES.

I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT THIS ISSUE REMAINS AT THE VERY TOP OF OUR PRIORITIES AND THAT WE ARE MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO RESOLVE IT IN A WAY WHICH YOU WILL FIND SATISFACTORY. YOUR MAJESTY IS AWARE OF THE MAJOR EFFORT WE HAVE INVESTED WITH OUR CONGRESS IN OVERCOMING THE EFFORTS OF SOME ELEMENTS TO PREVENT THE HAWK SALE. WE FEEL A STRONG RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE THAT IT IS CONSUMMATED IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF YOUR COUNTRY'S LEGITIMATE REQUIREMENT FOR A MODERN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM, BUT BECAUSE WE WOULD VERY DEEPLY REGRET THE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN OUR LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP THAT WOULD INEVITABLY BE SET IN MOTION, THROUGH THE REACTION OF PUBLIC OPINION IN THIS COUNTRY, IF YOUR MAJESTY WERE TO FEEL COMPELLED TO TURN TO A SOVIET SYSTEM FOR THIS MAJOR MILITARY ACQUISITION.

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I HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT YOU WILL REMAIN PATIENT WHILE WE CONTINUE OUR ATTEMPTS TO FIND AN ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM.

I SEND YOUR MAJESTY MY VERY BEST WISHES. HENRY A. KISSINGER. END TEXT. ROBINSON

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